

A) Amendments to the Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): The method of installing a prefabricated vertical drain into soil underlying a body of water comprising the steps of:

driving a prefabricated drain downwardly into soil underlying a body of water from the water surface with a surrounding mandrel,

withdrawing the mandrel and thereby leaving the prefabricated drain exposed,

capturing the exposed drain adjacent the water surface within a drain cutting assembly tethered to an operating line,

lowering the cutting assembly with the line into the water as guided by the captured drain, and

severing the drain below the surface of the water by actuating the cutting assembly adjacent the water surface with said line.

Claim 2 (withdrawn): A drain cutting assembly for remotely severing a vertical prefabricated drain comprising:

a utility knife having a J-shaped handle with opposite terminating ends and a J saddle therebetween and a cutting blade retained in said saddle;

capture means secured to the terminating ends of said handle and dimensioned and configured for providing side access there into of a drain and thereafter capturing said drain for guided edge engagement of said drain with said blade for severing said drain, and

an operating line tethered to said capture means for remotely manipulating said assembly to sever said drain with said blade.

Claim 3 (withdrawn): The drain cutting assembly of claim 2 wherein said capture means is comprised of a U-shaped frame having parallel legs with distal ends thereof respectively secured to said terminating ends of said handle, a gap in one of said legs dimensioned for admitting access of a drain into said frame, a capture bar having opposite ends slidably received respectively on said legs for sliding said bar toward said drain and said handle to capture said drain for guided severing by said blade.

Claim 4 (withdrawn) The drain cutting assembly of claim 3 wherein one of the leg slides of said capture bar is dimensioned and configured for closing said gap when said capture bar is fully slid toward said handle.

Claim 5 (withdrawn): The drain cutting assembly of claim 4 including a tether arm extending from said frame with said line secured to the distal end of said arm.